

VZCZCXRO7320  
OO RUEHPT  
DE RUEHBY #0508 1400742  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 190742Z MAY 08  
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9580  
INFO RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RHEHAAA/THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHBN/AMCONSUL MELBOURNE PRIORITY 5264  
RUEHPT/AMCONSUL PERTH PRIORITY 3546  
RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY PRIORITY 3459

UNCLAS CANBERRA 000508

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CCA AND EAP/ANP  
WHITE HOUSE FOR JULIE CRAMM

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [KPAO](#) [CU](#) [AS](#)  
SUBJECT: MARKING MAY 21 - DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH CUBAN  
PEOPLE - IN AUSTRALIA

REF: A. STATE 51536  
[1](#)B. HARKER-JACKSON TELECON OF MAY 16  
[1](#)C. STATE 46997  
[1](#)D. STATE 45792  
[1](#)E. CANBERRA 452

[1](#)1. (SBU) Further to Ref E, and as requested Ref A, U.S. Mission Australia has developed additional activities to help mark May 21 - Day of Solidarity with the Cuban People, as outlined in para 2, below. (We assume Ref B notification of a possible call by Deputy Assistant to the President Julie Cramm was to review Mission activities in relation to the President's May 21 statement on Cuba Solidarity Day.)

[1](#)2. (SBU) The U.S. Mission's proposed activities to mark May 21 as of COB May 19 include the following:

a. The Public Affairs Counselor and his staff have been in contact with print media in Australia's two largest cities, Sydney and Melbourne, regarding the draft op-ed sent to post last week (Ref A.) Major Melbourne papers have turned it down; we are awaiting a response from the Sydney editors.

b. We will be highlighting the Day of Solidarity with the Cuban People on-the Embassy's InterNet website.

c. Member of Parliament Michael Danby (prominent Australian Labor Party (ALP) member from Melbourne, and Chair of the Australian-American Parliamentary Friendship Association) volunteered to circulate a statement in support of the Cuban people among other MPs and offered to write an op-ed for the Australian Financial Review, a highly-respected national newspaper. (We have provided him background information contained in Ref A, as well as the Cuba sections of the Human Rights Report and the Freedom House Country Reports.)

d. Consulate General Sydney successfully contacted Luis Garcia, a prominent Cuban-born exile who recently published his memoirs, entitled Child of the Revolution: Growing Up in Castro's Cuba, detailing his family's mistreatment under Castro, who has tentatively accepted an invitation to a consulate social event on May 22 (he is unavailable on May 21.).

e. CG Melbourne has conducted outreach to a Member of the Victorian State Parliament with close ties to the general Hispanic community in that area. We are exploring his suggestions that the Mission consider screening one or two documentaries focusing on human rights in Cuba, and that we seek a prominent federal member of Parliament to circulate a public petition affirming support for the people of Cuba.

f. We have approached officials in the Americas Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). DFAT has confirmed the GOA has no plans to mark Cuban Solidarity Day, preferring quiet diplomacy with regards to Cuba. (Note: Cuba is opening an embassy in Canberra in two or three months, according to DFAT. While Havana has not yet nominated an ambassador, some advance staff arrived last week, and Cuba has already opened a consulate in Sydney. End note.)

13. (SBU) We may not receive confirmation until the morning of May 21 (evening of May 20 EDT - Canberra is 14 hours ahead of Washington, D.C.) that local papers have published our draft op-ed or the one promised by Michael Danby, MP, thus we would suggest no reference to them be inserted into the President's statement or other public announcement unless and until we can confirm this telephonically. The point of contact for such confirmation is: Scott Weinhold, Counselor for Public Affairs, tel: (o) 61-2-6214-5770; cell: 61-402-956-119; home: QAffairs, tel: (o) 61-2-6214-5770; cell: 61-402-956-119; home: 61-2-6166-0644.

STETTENBAUER